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Thomas D. Meyer, Administrator

## Iosco County Medical Care Facility

Michigan State House of Representatives  
Families, Children, and Seniors Committee  
The Honorable Chair, Kenneth Kurtz

Dear Representative Kurtz and members of the Families, Children, and Seniors Its my honor to be here today and address your committee. My name is Thomas Meyer and I currently serve as Administrator for the Iosco County Medical Care Facility a 78 bed skilled nursing home located in Tawas City, Michigan in representative Rendon's district. I also serve as co-chairperson on the legislative and regulatory committees for the Michigan County Medical Care Facilities Council and in that capacity I am tasked with communicating to the legislature concerns affecting and impacting our members.

Michigan's County Medical Care Facilities are county government owned non-profit facilities designated as class III facilities we are required to admit Medicaid residents on a first come, first serve basis, thus serving as the State of Michigan's safety net for long-term-care.

I am here today to urge your support of Senate Bill 884. Senate Bill 884 passed the Senate with unanimous support. The provisions of Senate Bill 884 would require the Bureau of Health Systems, the state agency tasked with nursing home oversight, to establish several new systems.

- Additional training for new nursing home surveyors.
- Requires the nursing home survey process to be effectively and efficiently coordinated.
- It requires the department to make every effort to close out any open enforcement cycle before starting an annual standard survey while maintaining all federal survey interval requirements.

In no way do these improvements or efficiencies required by the department as a result of the passage of this Bill impact or lessen the federal regulations for certification in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Neither do they detract from the requirements of state rules for nursing home licensure. Most certainly they do not circumvent the requirements established in the public health code or sections of public acts as they pertain to the operation of a skilled nursing home in the State of Michigan.

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Many county owned and operated Medical Care Facilities have found themselves on the receiving end of difficult enforcement penalties such as civil money fines, denial of payments and bans on admissions. Counties have stepped up and continued to provide care even in the face of non-payment to ensure our most frail citizens receive the care they deserve. Somehow it does not seem fair that care should be provided at the expense of the county involved when survey inefficiencies are to blame.

County Medical Care Facilities recognize the need for a robust regulatory system to ensure the safety of Michigan's most frail elderly and we support oversight to ensure our citizens are receiving quality care. What we have issues with is a survey system that is inefficient and outdated. The department needs to be required to develop an electronic system to improve efficiencies and coordinate their efforts so survey cycles don't cause unnecessary penalties and ruin a Medical Care Facilities reputation in the communities they serve.

The County Medical Care Facility Council has examined statistics related to enforcement penalties assessed by the department . You might be surprised to know that Michigan had the highest rate of denial of payment penalties for new admissions against nursing facilities compared to other nursing facilities nationally for 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2010.

Nursing homes are held to a very high standard as well we should be. This bill will set both the department and the facilities on a path toward working together toward increased quality of care. The County Medical Care Facility Council is requesting your support of Senate Bill 884

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Families, Children, and Seniors Committee on this serious matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas D. Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Meyer" clearly legible.

Thomas D. Meyer, RN, NHA, MACHCA